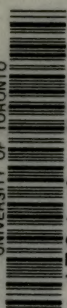


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THE TOILS OF YOSHITOMO



DRAMAS BY TORAHIKO KORI



SAUL AND DAVID

A Drama in Five Acts

*(Published A. L. Humphrey)*

KANAWA: THE INCANTATION

A Play for Marionettes

*(Published Gowans & Gray)*

ABSALOM

A Tragedy in Three Acts, and Prologue

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THE HEARTH OF ODYSSEUS

A Play in Four Acts

*(In Preparation)*

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# THE TOILS OF YOSHITOMO

A TRAGEDY OF ANCIENT JAPAN

BY  
TORAHIKO KORI



LONDON:  
SELWYN & BLOUNT, LTD.  
21, YORK BUILDINGS, ADELPHI, W.C. 2

THE

# TOILS OF YOSHITOMO

A TRAGEDY OF ANCIENT JAPAN

BY

FORAHIKO KORI

*First Published in 1922*

*English Version assisted by H. M. Sainsbury*



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## PERSONS

TAMEYOSHI	Chief of the Minamoto (Genji) clan and commander of the armies of the ex-Emperor Sutoku
YOSHITOMO	} Commander of the armies of the Emperor Go-Shirakawa
TAMETOMO	
YORIKATA	} Sons of Tameyoshi
YORINAKA	
TAMEMUNE	
TAMENARI	
TAMENAKA	
YORITOMO	Infant son of Yoshitomo
KIYOMORI	Chief of the Taira (Heike) clan
MOTOMORI	} Nobles of the Taira clan
SUKEMORI	
NORINAGA	Courtier to the ex-Emperor Sutoku
SHINZEI	Courtier-priest to the Emperor Go- Shirakawa
MASAKIYO	Chief vassal of Yoshitomo
SHOSON	An abbot
RYOI	} His monks
GENSHIN	
CHIHAYA	Daughter of Tameyoshi
SADA	Wife of Yoshitomo
NURSE	to Yoritomo
Vassals, Retainers, Soldiers and Maidservants	

THE BEGINNING OF THE TWELFTH CENTURY IN  
KYOTO AND ITS ENVIRONS

# PERSONS

Chief of the Mikasa (Mikasa) ship  
and commander of the ship of  
the 1st Japanese Division  
Commander of the ship of the  
Japanese Division

Sons of Tamiyoshi

Chief of the 1st Division  
Chief of the 2nd Division

Notes of the 1st Division

Center to the 1st Division  
Center to the 2nd Division  
Center to the 3rd Division

Chief vessel of 1st Division

An allied

the 1st

the 1st Division

the 1st Division

to 1st Division

Vessel, 1st Division, 1st Division

The 1st Division of the 1st Division

1st Division

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# ACT I



## SCENE I

*The sanctuary of a small Buddhist temple in the hilly outskirts of KYOTO.*

*On the left the altar with its sacred images, incense-burner and other religious appurtenances. On the right "fusuma" (paper sliding-doors) lead to the dwelling part. At the back a double set of sliding-doors, "shoji" (made of wooden lattice-work covered with paper), and their outer protecting doors of solid wood, lead to the "yengawa" (verandah) and the garden.*

*It is an autumn evening ; all the doors are closed and only a dim light is given by the tapers burning before the altar.*

*GENSHIN, an acolyte, coming from the yengawa, flings open the shoji. A fire is seen spurting up in the distance across the starless darkness.*

GENSHIN

Ryoi ! Ryoi ! Again there is a fire !

RYOI, a young monk, enters by the fusumas on the right.



RYOI

Again? Is it nearby? Ah!—

GENSHIN

Nay, it is by Kiyomizu, over there among the villages; it sprang up before my eyes like a huge frightened bird. Look, how it spreads!

RYOI

No wonder when the leaves of those birchwoods are all withered—and the wind may rise to-night.

GENSHIN

It is blowing keen in the east already.

*Pause.*

GENSHIN

*(lowering his voice)*

But was it not there, just there among those woods, where Myoshin was sent to-day?

RYOI

Take care, Genshin!

GENSHIN *comes up into the room and stands beside RYOI. They both speak in an undertone.*

GENSHIN

'Tis the third fire in these four days, Ryoï, each in a place we know too well—this also, like the others, cannot be kindled by chance.

RYOI

Aye, we have not long to wait for our turn now.

GENSHIN

O Ryoi, Ryoi, do you think that they may find our temple now? Can it be that we——

RYOI

*(suddenly spying something in the darkness)*

There! What is that moving in the darkness?

GENSHIN

*(clutching Ryoi's arm)*

The soldiers!

*Pause.*

RYOI

No, it is these citizens in flight again.

GENSHIN

So it is, so it is, praised be Buddha!——I thought 'twas soldiers.

RYOI

How hushed they go, as if they dreaded their own footsteps. Those ill-boding flames must have quickened their fears.

GENSHIN

There must be few left now to fly; walking to-day from east to west the long avenue of Shijo, I saw neither to right nor left an open house. I tell you, Ryoi, to hear the sound of my footsteps I might have been pacing an empty valley.

RYOI

You saw no soldiers?

GENSHIN

Yes, soldiers, many, in groups ; but they were silent too, scanning those they passed as if they knew not whether they were friends or foes to come.

*Pause.*

GENSHIN

*(passionately)*

O, Ryoi, what then will become of us ! How many lives of sorrow must we not suffer to atone for this hour of passion ! We, we of all men, in our robes of peace and compassion, so to sin against the Way of Law——

*Unnoticed, the abbot SHOSON enters from the right.*

SHOSON

Is it thus you obey my words, my children ?

GENSHIN

Father abbot !

RYOI

You have returned, father !

SHOSON

Well may you be astonished when you leave the gate unguarded and the door unwatched.

RYOI

We are to blame, father, but this fire——

SHOSON

The fire, is it ? Did I bid you guard the fire over on the hills there ? 'Tis a much, much nearer fire we have to guard against ! Well, well, let it pass ;

go to your posts at the gate. Has Myoshin returned yet ?

RYOI

No, father (*observing lights approaching beyond the garden*). But there are torches and a litter at the gate.

SHOSON

Ah, then, our guest arrives.

*They all go into the garden through the yengawa. Pause. SHOSON comes back leading NORINAGA ; RYOI, from without, closes the inner and outer sliding-doors.*

NORINAGA

So he said he would come ?

SHOSON

He will come, my lord ; but my task was all the sadder when I found his house gay with preparations for a feast to-night.

NORINAGA

A feast ?

SHOSON

To celebrate, I gather, this great honour that has befallen his son Yoshitomo.

NORINAGA

Ah !

*Pause.*

NORINAGA

Yet he said that he would come ?

SHOSON

Yes, though he must at once have fathomed all this summons meant ; he only begged you would

release him before the Hour of Boar when he expects his guests.

NORINAGA

Never was father fonder and prouder of his child than Tameyoshi of his eldest son, and, be it said, none ever with more occasion. Alas, that I should be the means of bringing war between them ! — Father Abbot, this night will weigh heavy on my heart till the end of my days.

SHOSON

Truly it seems asking more of man than lies in his giving, even on a day whose common woe shadows in each heart its native grief.—You think he will accept ?

NORINAGA

He will if he is still the man he was ; a warrior with a heart fashioned only for heroic toils, but—Heaven forgive me, I could almost wish——

*A knocking is heard on the outer doors.*

SHOSON

What is it ?

VOICE OF RYOI

Another litter approaches the gate, father.

SHOSON

(to NORINAGA) It must be he (*he opens part of the sliding doors*). So the fire is dying ; the wind must have blown it towards the fields.

*He goes out and in a little while returns, bringing TAMEYOSHI, and after shutting the sliding-doors at the back, retires through the fusumas on the right. The two nobles bow to one another.*



NORINAGA

Forgive this strange meeting-place, my lord, but these grave days teach us to be prudent.

TAMEYOSHI

I am ever at your call if I can serve you, my lord.

*Pause.*

NORINAGA

In other days, when the ex-Emperor still held the throne, you were the chief of his swords, the first of his arrows, most trusted of his warriors ; my mission to-night can be no riddle to you.

TAMEYOSHI

I am but an old warrior, with no more learning than my right hand may conquer with sword or with arrow ; no inheritance but a stubborn faith to whoso puts his cause into my keeping. And as neither beast nor bird questions the journey of the sun, the warrior disputes not the roads of Providence in whose rule alone is our immemorial throne.

NORINAGA

Yet twenty years ago you were the boldest to denounce the cunning coil of dark intrigues that robbed our Master of his throne and gave it to an infant stepbrother. And what is it now we see ? Scarcely by this young Emperor dying, has our Master re-won his power and place, when the same threads are spun, the same web woven and another younger brother is preferred before him.

## TAMEYOSHI

You are pleased to remember my past follies, which earned me the stern rebuke of my Master himself.

## NORINAGA

True, he loved his people's peace too dearly to shake the clouds from his dragon sleeves that would have veiled with storm his golden land, and bade us serve him still in his new palace as the ex-Emperor, second lord of Japan. Yet, a destiny such as his, and the fame of a throne which is the heirloom of the gods, can never suffer the twice telling of this tale of shame. My lord, it is the wish of your sometime Emperor now, when he arises at the urge of Heaven to redeem his stolen birthright, that again you lead his armies.

*Pause.*

## TAMEYOSHI

Great honour my august Master does me, beyond the furthest dreams of a frosty age like mine. But I have long been strangered to my calling: years since, I gave my son my ancestral armour, dreading lest my waning strength should slur its comely fame.—Alas, my lord, age sits heavy on my neck which once knew no bending, and slack are the sinews in my arms once tough as my good bow-string. How then shall I lift a standard broidered with the stars of heaven?

## NORINAGA

Forget not that no other hero's voice, however strong in youth he be, can whet each sword and wing each arrow as can one call from you upon the field.—We seek you late, my lord, only for that all our hearts were sore, from the highest to the humblest, with the sorrow this command would bring upon yours, since your son is chosen to lead the Emperor's armies. But search as we might we could discover none with a name or an authority like yours that could support a charge so fateful, and now the hour can brook no more delaying.

## TAMEYOSHI

How shall I answer your generous words, my lord? And yet, for a warrior, his sword is both his joy and his faith, the hard steel both thought and speech for him. How then shall his voice be clear and his spirit single if his sword be levelled at his own son—or his father?

*SHOSON comes in from the right.*

## SHOSON

Forgive me, my lords, but there are soldiers below on the high road!

## NORINAGA

Soldiers?

## SHOSON

They are down at the foot of the hill and seem to be searching for our temple. But there is a

hidden path above us ; I and my monks will lead you towards the bridge of Gojo.

GENSHIN *runs in from the right.*

GENSHIN (*panting*)

They are climbing the hill, father !

SHOSON

I beg you follow me, my lords.

*He turns swiftly to the right, followed by*

NORINAGA, TAMEYOSHI and GENSHIN.

*Pause. RYOI runs in and fastens the " san " (bolt) on the outer doors. GENSHIN again appears on the threshold.*

GENSHIN

Oh, brother !——

RYOI

Is it done ? Have you poured oil on all the papers ?

GENSHIN

Yes, yes ; and see, my sleeve is burned—O merciful Buddha !

RYOI

Quick, quick then, come ! They are at the gate already.

*He hastily puts out the tapers and drags GENSHIN away, leaving the stage in darkness. Pause. Suddenly there is a violent knocking on the doors accompanied by the shouting of rough voices.*

CURTAIN

## SCENE II

*A spacious room in TAMEYOSHI'S house, surrounded by gold-covered fusumas on which the Minamoto family crest, painted big in dark blue, is repeated as a pattern. It is the hour directly following the previous scene, and the room is brilliantly lighted by numerous lanterns on tall lacquered posts of black and gold. The fusumas at the back are slid aside, and TAMEYOSHI comes in followed by his six sons—YOSHITOMO, YORIKATA, YORINAKA, TAMEMUNE, TAMENARI, TAMENAKA, and by his daughter, CHIHAYA and SADA, the wife of YOSHITOMO, with their little son YORITOMO.*

YORITOMO

*(clinging to TAMEYOSHI'S sleeve)*

You wicked Grandfather, why did you go away and leave us all waiting so long for you, when you know the guests are coming soon and Aunt Chihaya is going to dance?



TAMEYOSHI

Forgive me, little lad, but I went for a great reason.

YORITOMO

Shall I guess why?—To fetch some present for my father!

TAMEYOSHI

So I did, little guesser. You are right.

YORITOMO

(*To YOSHITOMO*)

Aha, Father, you see? (*to TAMEYOSHI*) I knew it, Grandfather, I told everybody so! But what is it? Have you got it now? Is it something to make him strong in the battle, strong like a god?

TAMEYOSHI

Indeed it is! I think it will make him even stronger than a god (*sitting down on the right*). Sit down, my sons and daughters, there is time before our guests arrive for you to hear my tidings; and though, indeed, I bring them first for Yoshitomo, no child of mine but has a share in them.

*All his sons and daughters sit down in a semi-circle, facing him, YORITOMO still leaning in his lap.*

YOSHITOMO

Chihaya tells us that an abbot came to see you. What news can you have heard on this great eve?

## TAMEYOSHI

Our confidence has been a little hasty, Yoshitomo. Your triumph in arms, which we considered as a bridge already crossed to the real tasks that wait you when you've put off your helmet, may, after all, prove none so simple.

## YOSHITOMO

And what fairer fortune could I have prayed for? If only for the fame's sake of my armour, which in bygone days has been so often in the eyes of princely enemies their last image of this world, I was longing for a better fight than this meagre war has promised. Nay, were it not for what it led to, and the vow which I have sworn to my dead fathers, what honour should I gain taking the field against an enemy three times weaker, with a captain they must pick haphazard from a score of petty names? So the promised help from Nara has arrived?

## TAMEYOSHI

No, my son, as yet no dust is rising on the road from Nara, and no horses neighing. Nor need you now be daunted if your heart, like good steel from the forge, rings the truer under sharper blows. Remember only, whatever obstacle waylays you, with this command you can save or wreck forever the hopes and fortunes of our clan, and that a moment of such promise was never ours before, in spite of all your fathers' fervent prayers.

## YOSHITOMO

I am what you have made me, father. Since I could hold a sword or frame a vow you have trained me for such a day as this which should dispel once for all the evil dreams that have coiled so long about our roof. And if——

## TAMEYOSHI

Evil dreams and a long night truly ! And all this disgrace because we are warriors—because our tongues, like our swords, know no supple bending, and our feet, like our shafts, no crooked paths. Yet what noble can boast a prouder source than we, whose blood flows from Emperors ? But warrior clans, it seems, are only watch-dog clans even denied the floor of the inner palace, where long-sleeved nobles may dally at their ease with the softer games of poetry and music, basking in the world's worship !

## YOSHITOMO

But why do you revive this gloomy tale ? My oath is but the echo of the voices of my ancestors, calling from the darkness of their tombs, and already I see my sword shimmering into a hundred ghostly blades. Were it all the furies of the gods we fought, I know our swords are pledged too deep for swerving till they bring us from the shadows to our ancient pride, even to that seat beneath the throne where we shall take from the soft hands of courtiers the reins that guide Japan.

TAMEYOSHI

Patience, my son, patience ! The world is wide not only for your courage, but maybe for your dismay and—sorrow too. Firstly, this meagre war as you called it, though granting you still a heavy odds in men, has found you in their leader an antagonist worth your sword.

YOSHITOMO

Ah, they have found a leader at last ? But even so, what then ? With your teaching in my blood can I not afford to laugh in the face of any foe though Tamura the war-god should confront me, scattering the sand of his burial mound ?

TAMEYOSHI

Perhaps for you, Yoshitomo, one name is more terrible than Tamura's—his who has taught you to live and to die for the faith you once have sworn.

*At first they are all struck dumb, then they break forth in ejaculations of horror.*

YOSHITOMO AND OTHERS

Father—— !

TAMEYOSHI

Yes, it is I, and proud you may be of your enemy !

*A deadly pause.*

YORITOMO

*(who has been asleep in TAMEYOSHI'S lap and is now woken by the exclamations)*

What is it, Grandfather ? What have you given him ?

TAMEYOSHI

A talisman, little son, which shall make your father strong in the battle; and very strong he needs to be, for I am going to fight him!

YORITOMO

You, Grandfather—you? With your white hair and your bent back?

SADA

Hush, Yoritomo, come to Mother.

YORITOMO *unwillingly quits TAMEYOSHI and goes to SADA, whose pale face becomes almost lit with anguish as she watches her husband's face.*

YOSHITOMO

Forgive my blind and foolish words! If my tongue has sinned in ignorance, my deeds shall make atonement, my horse shall ride by yours, my sword be drawn by yours: so long as my body casts a shadow on the earth it is your shadow, Father.

TAMEYOSHI

Now indeed foolish words are on your tongue! Never can the gods have let me beget and breed a coward to inherit my honour. What is then your oath to your Emperor and to your ancestors, aye, and to me too, if you fear this fight against me which you have sworn for us all?



## YOSHITOMO

But you cannot—nor the dead nor the living can ever demand of me this!—What is a faith which must be broken ere it is fulfilled? What is an oath whose keeping condemns the swearer by all in earth and heaven? Father, forgive me if in this I disobey you, it is not for a man——

## TAMEYOSHI

And cannot a son of Minamoto perform those things which would dismay the sons of other men? What makes your blood if not a wrath and grief, a pride and faith, husbanded for ages till it now surpasses the quality of all besides? Do you wail for the dust-soft roads, smoothed by the trudging feet of humbler thousands, when a track lies before you among the rocks unhewn? When the winds howl and the mountains shake does the eagle take cover in the nest of the sparrow? For shame, for shame! You are no son of mine if you forsake the Dead and betray their trust this day. Say no more, or else my lips shall burn with a curse no father yet breathed on his child!

*A MAIDSERVANT enters by the fusumas on the right.*

## MAIDSERVANT

My lord, the honoured guests have come.

## TAMEYOSHI

*(standing up)*

Come then, my children, let us feast for joy that once again it is ours to teach the world how

proud a thing is man and how precious his faith.  
And let our wine, in the cups of all who drink  
with us, be a draught to kindle their hearts till  
their day of death.

YORITOMO

*(again seizing his Grandfather's hand)*

Has the feast come at last, and the singing and  
the dancing?—Oh, I am not sleepy any more!

TAMEYOSHI

Yes, a good feast and one to remember, my  
child.

*He goes out with the child, his five sons follow-  
ing in utter silence.*

CHIHAYA

*(clinging to YOSHITOMO's sleeve as he stands up  
distractedly)*

Brother!—Brother, you could not bring this  
ruin on yourself—on us all——

SADA

*(clinging to his other sleeve)*

My lord—O my lord!——

YOSHITOMO tries to speak, but in the end,  
without a word, he frees himself and follows  
his brothers. SADA drops forward with  
her face in her hands.

CHIHAYA

*(holding her in her arms)*

Ah, no, it is not now you should despair, Sada,

now, when they need the gentler hands of women to unravel the tangled threads of our poor fates.

SADA  
*(faintly)*

Not my hands, Chihaya, not your hands ; no hands—can untie the days that are coming. Long ago I saw them, I saw them plainly, and now I see—ah, my life is done.

CHIHAYA

What is it you are saying ? How you tremble ! It is indeed an unkind world that greets you after your wanderings in the slow, dark months of pain.

SADA

Would I had never left those shadows, never seen the sun again ! So should I have died imagining my dreams were only visions spun of fever ; now, alas, I must wander my lonely worlds forever haunted and tormented by their fearful images——

CHIHAYA

What dreams are you talking of ? What terror haunts you so ? Ah, tell me, Sada, tell me ! Can we not make a common pain of every sorrow and share our fears always, always with one heart, like a single taper burning though the night and the wind be without ?

SADA

You were born with a braver heart, Chihaya ; you may endure to live and see them dawning in the light of day, but I—I cannot !

CHIHAYA

What is this strange tale of dreams and visions ?  
What did you see and never tell me ?

SADA

*(fainter still, though not falling into a whisper)*

When they came the days grew dark as though black waves closed over me, and the nights—the nights were burnt with throbbing flame.— O Chihaya, I have no breath to say—even now, God of Myojin! there again you see! You see—  
*(her voice is still audible though her next words are lost.)*

CHIHAYA

*(recoiling in terror at the last words which she alone hears)*

Ah, never, never ! No, not that—it is not true !

SADA

Yes, yes, and all his brothers one by one, all—  
Ah ! *(she faints)*.

CHIHAYA

Woe to the days that are upon us ! May the harvest wither in the seed, and the flower in the stalk, and the fruits when they are green—that men and women shall suffer as Genji suffers if your dreams come true ! *(she falls on SADA)*.

CURTAIN

## ACT II





## SCENE I

*A room in YOSHITOMO'S house seen from the garden.*

*With its shoji borders and surrounding yengawa, which disappears to the left, the room occupies two-thirds of the stage on the left. As the front shojis are opened, the left and back of the room can be seen bordered with fusumas and decorated with patterns of pine-tree tops peering from the mist. The garden is partitioned on the right by a fence of plaited wood, with a little gate in it and shrubs planted alongside, beyond which tower the pine-trees of another part of the garden. A few large stones, arranged like stepping-stones, lead to the big stone step where those entering the house take off their footgear.*

*It is two days after the previous act. The afternoon skies are overclouded and threaten storm.*

YORITOMO, *with a little bow and arrows in his hand, is sitting with his NURSE on the yengawa ; she is trying to put on his " zori " (matting sandals), in spite of his rebelliously swinging feet.*

YORITOMO

No, no, I do not want to go ! Ah, Nurse, please let me stay by Mother till she wakes ; I know she

is very sick but I will not make a sound. I will sit quite still till she calls me. Don't you see I have not shown her yet my bow that Grandfather gave me ?

NURSE

Come, my little lord, you must do as Father says. Shall we go and see the priest of Kurodani and ask him to show us all his puppies ? You never saw such tiny things ! And they are so round and so warm, and they bite and kick each other all day long. How you will laugh at the funny games they play ! Come now, you surely want to see them ?

YORITOMO

Yes, and yet Mother, when she wakes, will wonder where I am. You say she did not want me in the night, yet all through the night I know I heard her calling me. But why does she sleep so long ? She has not opened her eyes once since morning—ah, there, you are crying again ! Why does everybody cry to-day, Nurse ? And Father's crying too, look !

*YOSHITOMO comes into the room through the fusumas at the back.*

NURSE

*(taking Yoritomo away into the garden on the left)*

Come now, come ; he is a good child, and I will beg the priest of Kurodani to give him all those little round puppies, shall I ?

*They both go.*

YOSHITOMO

*(standing distractedly on the threshold by the front shoji)*

Indeed, your father knows no more than you, child, why your mother lies there, and yet is there no more. It is a strange world and a strange storm that drives it northward, southward—and your father is no more than a wind-tossed tree, with all that throbs in his heart stripped and torn, while the howling drift goes through and through him.

MASAKIYO, *in full armour, comes along the yengawa from the left and sits down in silence.*

YOSHITOMO

How now, what is the matter ?

MASAKIYO

They wait you at the Palace. It is time to arm yourself, my lord.

YOSHITOMO

To arm myself ! *(suddenly brought back to reality, bitterly)*. True, 'tis time to trim myself in red-gold and the bright-horned helmet and go a-dancing mad dances ! The mourning chants and sorrowing bells of war-cries and battle-songs make a fit dirge for a warrior's wife, maybe.

*The noise of a scuffle and loud voices comes from beyond the garden hedge. TAMETOMO appears, breaking down the gate. He is of gigantic stature and ferocious appearance.*

TAMETOMO

*(roaring over his shoulder)*

That's for twitching my whiskers, you dogs !  
Leave sniffing my heels !

YOSHITOMO

*(striding out on to the yengawa)*

What riot is this ? Who dares break——How !  
Tametomo, you—— !

TAMETOMO

Let me see you, Brother ! Ha ! though the devil must have bought you dear, he's left you still a face that I remember. For all that, 'tis short work my hands will make of you ! Well may you curse the chance that blew my sail to the shore of Naniwa this dawn.

YOSHITOMO

So then the fugitives told you their tale ?

TAMETOMO

Aye, a pretty tale ! And scarce had I a foot on the shingle ere a horse was between my knees and the high road flying from her hoofs. But 'twas a good race : I am in time to save our name from a taint of parricide and rid your shoulders of their impious burden.

YOSHITOMO

Have done with this foolery ! There are more things in the world than your roaring and the sea



winds. What do you know of the happenings here? Get you to our father, he has need of you.

TAMETOMO

*(mounting the stone before the yengawa)*

Not with empty hands!

MASAKIYO

My lord, this is a house of mourning!

TAMETOMO

Mourning?

MASAKIYO

Our lady is gone from us this day.

TAMETOMO

What, she—Sada—is dead? *(touched to the heart, he bows his head)*. Forgive me, Brother—and I with my brute tongue disturbed her rest——

YOSHITOMO

Make haste, we have no time for words. Go, join my father! He will be gladder of your arms than of hordes of soldiers, and—keep him from harm, his forces are a third of mine, his cause is lost already.

TAMETOMO

I remember some poor wretch told me that too. Well, Brother, till we meet in the saddle then!

*He strides away through the broken gate.*

*CHIHAYA, coming through the fusumas at the back, catches sight of TAMETOMO as he disappears.*

CHIHAYA

But that was Tametomo! Has he come back then?

YOSHITOMO

Our patron god has driven him home from his wild sea wanderings when never more my father needed those mighty arms and that stout heart.

CHIHAYA

*(quickly turning to him)*

But you, you—— O Yoshitomo, you are not going to-day—to-day to battle? Surely you cannot now be thinking——

YOSHITOMO

*(to MASAKIYO)*

Be ready, I will call you soon.

MASAKIYO *withdraws.*

CHIHAYA

Oh, turn back, turn back, if only for her sake! Did she not die—alas, did she not die with a prayer on her lips that might have hushed all the clamour and the dust of the world? Was it not enough that she threw her precious life between your cruel, cruel swords, must you also cause her gentle soul to wander uncomforted from sorrow to sorrow? Ah, Brother, what is it—what is it that can turn your tender heart to so much stone?

*A RETAINER comes running into the garden from the left: MASAKIYO also comes along the yengawa.*

RETAINER

My lord, they have attacked the bridge of Sanjo and overcome the watch there !

YOSHITOMO

What ! Hatano has lost the bridge ?

RETAINER

He himself was killed at his post and many with him. It was the New Palace army in force, my lord, with the standard——

YOSHITOMO

Eh ? What standard ? Have you lost your tongue ?

MASAKIYO

He says it was Lord Tameyoshi who——

YOSHITOMO

What, fellow ! You say it was my father ?

RETAINER

We saw him riding in the front.

CHIHAYA

Oh, is there nothing—nothing that can avert this horror !

MASAKIYO

And Kiyomori is marching to strike a counter-blow : he is passing by us now !

YOSHITOMO  
(*flaring up*)

What game is this? Taira on the move without my orders?

MASAKIYO

And his soldiers insult us as they pass, calling us traitors, saying we played the bridge into your father's hands.

YOSHITOMO

They dare—they shall repent it!

MASAKIYO

My lord, you know Kiyomori. Since you were given the command he coveted, he only lives to wreak his vengeance on you by capturing your father.

YOSHITOMO

I thought as much.—Fetch my armour, Masakiyo. Get the men on the march!

MASAKIYO *and the RETAINER rush out.*

YOSHITOMO

Farewell, Chihaya, 'tis even as you see. My world seems built in madness of the braying, tearing storm; in vain I seek a corner where I may sit alone with my shadow and my grief. Pray, my sister, pray for the quiet of her soul: pray in my name to the merciful Buddhas that they give her of their kindness since her lord may give her none; may not even mourn for her nor lead her to her bed in the earth. O Chihaya, warm as yours or any

woman's is a warrior's heart ; under his hard, cold armour his well of tears is deep as yours—tears are hot, Chihaya, under heavy armour, like drops of molten lead, they burn——

MASAKIYO *brings in his armour.*

YOSHITOMO

*(shaking himself)*

And have no fear for my father ; Tametomo now has joined our other brothers, and I—by fighting him at least can save him from these hounds of Taira. Oh if the battle be but loud enough to drown the cry within me !

*War-drums and war-gongs, each struck alternately with two sharp blows, suddenly break out in rhythmic clamour as loud as thunder.*

CURTAIN



## SCENE II

*A wild and rocky untrodden path on the ridge of NYOI hill. Towards the left another path forks from it and descends steeply to the city. To the right rises a thickly wooded hill, at the base of which a little bamboo aqueduct jets clear mountain water, which flows in a little stream down to the left. The distant mountain ranges which surround the city bound the horizon.*

*Panic-stricken SOLDIERS stream from the right and rush down the road that leads to the city. MOTOMORI and SUKEMORI, young nobles of the clan of TAIRA, are standing by some old tree-stumps with three of their VASSALS, hoarsely shouting to the terrified soldiers and trying in vain to stop them.*

MOTOMORI

Are you mad, the pack of you? Stop, stop!  
What is this terror when the field is ours?

SUKEMORI

Turn round, you cowards, dogs would have more shame! Has he more heads than one? Does he breathe fire?

FIRST VASSAL

Are there no wits among you all? The enemy is routed and you turn tail like rats!

SECOND VASSAL

Have you no eyes? He has shot his last arrow, and is neither god nor goblin! Turn and stand against him!

SUKEMORI

*(stringing an arrow on his bow)*

Miserable fools! If a conquered foe can fill you with such terror you shall fear with better reason.

MOTOMORI

*(restraining him)*

Let the dust fly, Sukemori; what can we do with it? Dead or living, these men are men of mud, you cannot shoot hearts into them.

THIRD VASSAL

Arrows on their backs and swords on their thighs and they call themselves soldiers!

FIRST VASSAL

A flock of sparrows more like! Let a child toss a pebble they would blacken the sky.

*Meanwhile the SOLDIERS have been running on shouting: "Nay, it is a demon!"—"Look at his arrows!"—"We are men, why fight ogres?"—"Look at that tree-trunk of his!"—"Save yourselves! Save yourselves!" etc., etc., and by the time the FIRST VASSAL has made his last remark they have completely vanished.*

MOTOMORI

*(looking to the right)*

But here he comes, the savage himself ! Truly he looks as if he might scare the crows : his head will make a trophy, the envy of the camp !

*They stand shoulder to shoulder with their swords drawn. TAMETOMO appears, the very picture of a fierce war-god, with his head bare and his hair and beard dishevelled, and his famous bow, eight feet long, is slung across his back. He is brandishing an enormous tree-trunk.*

TAMETOMO

What dainty puppet-show is this ? Were the battle-drums so noisy that you lost your wooden wits and the signal for your exit ? Be off ! Be off ! Tumble over your fleet-foot friends before I jerk the strings and make you dance to another tune !

MOTOMORI

Nay, Tametomo, all your bragging cannot shrivel our swords to reeds ! Come, I am Motomori ; answer with your bellowing, if you can, the sharp tongues and silent of the swords of Taira.

SUKEMORI

Have you forgotten me, you outcast stroller of the seas ? 'Tis not so long since we had a small dispute, you and I, while still you played the pirate in the streets, cowing women and children with your bully's tricks.

TAMETOMO

*(genuinely delighted and throwing away his tree-trunk)*

Well met, well met ! How you are changed, Sukemori ! I never thought the little hero of the courtezans could clap his heart into a suit of war and prove a warrior to the bone. Good day to you, lads and good morrow !

MOTOMORI

Enough, enough ; it is with swords we speak in battle, and if you dread their bitter speech, surrender the old fox, your father !

TAMETOMO

Ha ! 'Tis play in earnest, is it ?

SUKEMORI

*(looking to the right)*

Praised be our guardian gods, there is the grey fox himself ! First get rid of this sea-savage, friends.  
*(they hurl themselves on TAMETOMO)*

TAMETOMO

*(swiftly picking up his tree-trunk)*

Fools ! It was a poor joke to vex me. *(He swings it right and left with terrific force, killing the two nobles and one VASSAL. As the other two VASSALS now run away to the left he hurls it after them.)* Here's a little shaft to speed you both to your masters. That's the way ! *(calling back to the right)* Nay, these were the last to encumber the road. *(looking round)*

Poor wretches, for all their taunts I would have spared them had they let my father be.

TAMEYOSHI, *with his thigh bound up, comes in supported by his sons YORIKATA, YORINAKA, TAMEMUNE, TAMENARI, and TAME-NAKA, some of his VASSALS following.*

TAMETOMO

Father, are you better, has your wound stopped bleeding?

YORIKATA

No, and he needs rest until it does.

TAMETOMO

None will fret him here; these were the only puppies left yapping and now they'll be more mannerly.

*They assist TAMEYOSHI to a tree-stump and make him drink water which they fetch in a helmet from the little bamboo spout.*

TAMEMUNE -

*(looking up to the right)*

But that is another of the hill paths from Yoshida!

YORINAKA

So it is!

*They look at each other uneasily.*

YORINAKA

We must gain the main road quickly, where we can find horses and shake off these plagues once for all.



(to the VASSALS) Go up, some of you, and keep watch where the path forks to Yoshida.

*A few VASSALS go.*

TAMEYOSHI

*(a little revived, but still very feebly, to TAMETOMO)*

Make haste, my son, make haste! Follow our Master, he and his escort are unprotected.

TAMETOMO

But they are far upon the road to Nara, beyond the reach of the bravest arrow; while these Taira fellows are close at our heels, all sweating to lay hands on you!

TAMEYOSHI

*(his old fierceness gradually mastering him)*

Fool! What is your father if he fail his Master now? An old carcass, nothing more, to you or anyone. Take this standard; your wrist shall lift it if mine cannot!

*He gives a rolled-up standard to TAMETOMO who takes it yet hesitates.*

TAMEYOSHI

Did you hear me rightly or has my old tongue played me false? I say go—go, and with my standard shield our Master's flight.

YORINAKA

*(aside to TAMETOMO)*

At the last turn of the road we saw Yoshitomo pursuing us; it is not hard to guess his purpose 'Twere as well you went.

TAMETOMO

I will obey you, Father.

TAMEYOSHI

That is my son ! you go with all my blessing.—Remember only, when once this charge is yours, you are no more your own free master but the steward of other destinies. Be watchful then ; let prudence check your reckless arm, be chary of wild arrows, be cautious ere you shake your reins, and—I also trust you can play a coward's part when it is demanded of you ?

TAMETOMO

Father !——

TAMEYOSHI

I have no time—when the season comes you will understand my words. Begone ! And make all speed towards Nara.

TAMETOMO

Father, farewell then, I will not forget : farewell, my brothers.

HIS BROTHERS

Farewell, we will be with you soon.

TAMETOMO *strides off to the left.*

TAMEYOSHI

*(shaking off the reverie in which he watched TAME-  
TOMO go)*

And we also should be on the road. Better his arms than mine for an escort, yet for all that, we

have loitered long enough with our Master out of sight. Come, my children, I am ready.

YORIKATA *and* YORINAKA *support him at each side. A VASSAL rushes in on the right.*

VASSAL

They are upon us, my lord, pouring down the path from Yoshida, and Kiyomori's standard among them !

YORIKATA

Kiyomori's standard ?

YORINAKA

So then these wolves have tracked us down, panting for our last drop of blood ; may vengeance pursue their souls forever !

TAMEMUNE

I knew that path would serve his turn too well for him to miss it.

TAMEYOSHI

What moves you so ? Why this sudden rage, when you know the road is long between our Master and his danger, and Tametomo better than fifty shields behind him ?

YORIKATA

But you are wounded, Father, and we a handful——

TAMEYOSHI

An old enemy is always welcome and deep is the feud between our clans, he could not choose

a fitter moment for our ancient hates to grapple.  
And the gods be witness, he shall complain of  
no poor greeting !

*An arrow comes whistling from the right.*

TAMENARI

Oho, you daring herald, you dispute the honours  
of the race, do you ? Come, see if you can win it  
twice ! (*he picks it up and shoots it back*).

YORINAKA

But Yoshitomo must be coming soon.

VASSAL

His men are close on the road now, but are still  
below the steep curve.

YORIKATA

Then stay with my father, Tamenari and  
Tamenaka, and see to his wound, while the rest  
of us keep Taira at bay at the foot of the hill.

TAMEYOSHI

What demon-spell is on my ears that they should  
hear such mockery ? My own sons speaking without  
shame of a surrender !—And all this tale of wonder  
as if, because my eyes are dim and my arms no  
longer supple, my arrows fly a different gait to those  
these striplings shoot ! Ha, whoever taunts me so,  
Kiyomori knows me better, and, thanks to this

day, so shall his children and their children after them.

*With a supreme effort he draws his sword and staggers out to the right. All his sons surge round him and disappear with him. Pause. The arrows fall faster from the right. Soon TAMENARI and TAMENAKA, the two youngest of TAMEYOSHI'S sons, bring him back unconscious with a fresh wound in the face. They lay him on the ground and busy themselves with his wound.*

TAMENAKA

The arrow has scarce grazed his brow, praised be Hachiman it was the fall that stunned him; he will soon revive.

*A war cry is heard close by.*

TAMENARI

Now they meet, sword to sword;—O Hachiman, god of the winged arrow and the keen blade, watch over the fate of Minamoto in the Hills of Nyoi this day!

TAMENAKA

*(looking to the right and suddenly crying out with joy)*

At last—Yoshitomo and his men!

TAMENARI

*(involuntarily leaving his father)*

Oh, Yoshitomo, blessed be your coming! Wake, Father, look up—'tis Yoshitomo!

YOSHITOMO runs in followed by a few RETAINERS.

YOSHITOMO

Am I too late ?

TAMENARI

Nay, the skin is torn, that is all ; he is unconscious from his fall—and very weak.

YOSHITOMO

Quick, then, bring water ! Here !

*He takes off his helmet, which TAMENAKA fills with water from the bamboo spout, and together they make TAMEYOSHI swallow a pill which YOSHITOMO takes from his " inro " (the warrior's drug case).*

YOSHITOMO

But he has two wounds ! His bound leg also bleeds—O gods, that you should bring me to this penance—track him down with my arrows, hunt him with my sword ! (*looking round*) and the others ?

TAMENAKA

Not one of us is hurt. Tametomo is gone to guard our Master, but the rest are fighting now up there——

YOSHITOMO

I saw it as I came, but when you brought my father I sent Masakiyo to stop the action. Oh, this cur Kiyomori ! I knew well he was on the prowl for my father, and but for his cursed double tongue would never have let him overreach me thus !



TAMENAKA

He moves, he wakes, look!—Father!

TAMEYOSHI

*(reviving)*

What is this—where am I?

TAMENARI

Here is Yoshitomo, Father, come to your rescue.

TAMEYOSHI

Yoshitomo?

TAMENARI *and* TAMENAKA *raise him till he is sitting up.*

YOSHITOMO

*(speaking with his soul on his lips)*

Father, forgive—forgive your wretched son!

TAMEYOSHI

*(breathing hard to restrain his emotion)*

Since when do generals rescue one another—and they adversaries and blood spilled between them? If your own hands shrink from delivering me to death you can but witness that mine are braver.

YOSHITOMO

O Father, deny me not this one grace; forbid me not this one favour, take not from me the poor shreds of all that my soul cherished for holy!—I see the blood on your white hair and your body torn with wounds and none on whom I can revenge you save on myself, most miserable. Ah, let the memory of my mother move you so far to grant

me this one prayer before the curses of all gods, all worlds, turn me to stone—to dust ! Father——

*YOSHITOMO has gradually raised his hand in supplication, and TAMEYOSHI, in spite of himself, bends forward and at last takes it in his own.*

TAMEYOSHI

O my son !

*There follows the silence of unchecked tears. Meanwhile MASAKIYO and other VASSALS and RETAINERS gather upon the scene, hushed and awed by the sight that greets them. At last someone whispers to MASAKIYO, who then approaches YOSHITOMO.*

MASAKIYO

My lord, it was too late.—My lord, Kiyomori of Taira comes.

*They all stand up, YOSHITOMO supporting TAMEYOSHI. KIYOMORI enters with the nobles and the VASSALS of his clan.*

KIYOMORI

Do I see the leader of the rebel army your prisoner, my lord ? Forgive me questioning my general, but 'tis a strange way of taking prisoners !

YOSHITOMO

Yes, he is my prisoner ; as for my way of taking captives, I please myself.

## KIYOMORI

True, my words were foolish enough. But I also have been fortunate in prizes; though less exalted than yours, I yet believe they will earn me the Emperor's thanks. (*To one of his VASSALS.*) Bring in my prisoners!—you, my lord, will forgive the strange manner of their conveyance.

KIYOMORI'S RETAINERS *carry in upon their shields the cruelly mangled corpses of YORIKATA, YORINAKA and TAMEMUNE. TAMEYOSHI and YOSHITOMO involuntarily stagger, while TAMENARI and TAMENAKA make as though to rush at KIYOMORI. YOSHITOMO half steps in front of them.*

## KIYOMORI

Do I know them, or need I ask——?

## YOSHITOMO

No, my lord.

## KIYOMORI

Ah!—And now, my lord, let me speak your honour with the lips of Heike and be the first to do you homage for this day's contrivance. May your sword that has so surely conquered never relinquish its prosperity,

## YOSHITOMO

Nay, my lord, your praise belongs to all, not least to you, for the gallant part you have played throughout the battle.

## CURTAIN



## ACT III





## SCENE I

*The garden of a cottage in a hollow among the KURAMA hills. Along the back runs a low wicker fence with a little gate in the middle, and beyond rise the dark walls of a dense forest of cedars. TAMENAKA, looking ill and pale to transparenence, leans against a little birch-tree which stands alone in the centre of the garden with a few last leaves still clinging to its branches. A month has passed since the previous act. A mellow, windless autumn day sinks rapidly to evening, while the forest, darkening minute by minute, casts a sombre shade into the garden.*

CHIHAYA, *with flowers in her hand, comes from the forest and enters by the little gate.*

CHIHAYA

Still in the garden, Brother, and you are not cold?

TAMENAKA

*(dreamily)*

How soft and warm it is this sunshine; scarce a breath of wind stirs the lingering leaves—you can count the cones falling in the forest.

CHIHAYA

It is true—it almost seems as if one's breath would make a little cloud on the sky as on a polished mirror ; so tender is the day that coming through the forest I almost feared to tread on the brown leaves lest I should hurt them.—And yet, take care, the sun has slipped already far down the west, and in these hills the dews of dusk are swift and eep.

TAMENAKA

You bring sweet flowers, Chihaya.

CHIHAYA

The kind nun, Myotei, gave them to me and said the valleys below Kifune are full and full of them, all drooping by the stream as if the running water was the silken woof that wove them. It must be wonderful to see, she said she would take us there one day, perhaps to-morrow, if you are well. But now come in with me and let us put them before the shrine.

TAMENAKA *stares beyond her as if his thoughts were far away.*

CHIHAYA

What ails you, Tamenaka ? Tamenaka ! You are not ill again ? You feel no fever ? (*she takes his hand and feels it.*)

TAMENAKA

No, Chihaya, I am not ill to-day.

CHIHAYA

What is it then? You look so strange! O dear child, what is the matter?

TAMENAKA

I must go, Chihaya——

CHIHAYA

What are you saying?

TAMENAKA

I must go—'tis the only thing I can do now.

CHIHAYA

Go? Go whither?

TAMENAKA

To the city—yes, to give myself up to Yoshitomo.

CHIHAYA

What wild words are these? O merciful Kwannon, my brother is bewitched!

TAMENAKA

If you could know the shame of this hidden life! To be living in constant fear—afraid of the rustle of leaves, the flutter of birds, the shadow of trees, of everything, everything—I cannot bear it any more.

CHIHAYA

What are you saying? What are you saying? Who but Yoshitomo himself bade us seek a refuge unknown even to him, because he dreaded what more the vengeance of the throne might ask of him? Only a miracle has spared your life——

## TAMENAKA

My life ! What is the value of a life which a single tear of mercy can redeem ? Because I am sick and my youth is withered I am not worth the caution of a foe, no, nor even his anger ! Yoshitomo might entreat and pray, but still they saw in Tamenari too true a son of Genji, and needed his blood also to calm their fear. While in me, though scarce two summers younger, they saw only a creature worth their pity—an ailing whelp whose tooth could be no danger.

## CHIHAYA

Again, again these dark thoughts returning and I, fool that I was, thinking they were vanished—forever gone like the shadow of a tree that is fallen ! Ah, how can you refuse Yoshitomo his one solace, he who has seen more cruel days and nights than any living man ?—Why, foolish little brother, have you forgotten that Tametomo, first of warriors, still cherishes his life in secret waiting for our days that are to come ?

## TAMENAKA

And would I not have dearly prized my life had I his iron arm ? Well might my father for the fate of Genji bid him play the coward, and Yoshitomo earn a name that turns men pale, but there is scarce the time to make of me either demon or coward—a faint breath to vanish with the morning dew.

CHIHAYA

No, no, you must not say such things !

TAMENAKA

Though living I have been so poor a thing, my death at least shall set my head by Tamenaka's on the head-board of Shijo, another bribe in Yoshitomo's hands with which to beg my father's precious life.

CHIHAYA

Ah, for pity, Tamenaka ! Think of me—even if these awful thoughts possess you, still, think of me, your sister whose heart from dawn till evening is in the sunshine that wraps you, and with the stars by night that watch you sleep. Ah, Tamenaka, have I not with you as with no other been play-mate and companion ? How many joys and sorrows did we not treasure in our little hearts, hid even from the dearest ? Have I not also been your mother—since, alas, she had to leave the world when scarcely you had entered it—and taught you all the sweetness of life ere others taught you the sternness of its pride ? And now, when you must think of all these cruel things, have you not one thought, not a shadow of pity for me ? What will become of me and my desolate world if you are gone, never to come again ?

TAMENAKA

Is not the sorrow mine as much as yours ? If your tender love had not made of my threadbare



leaf of life a thing as fair and sweet as a young willow on a spring day, long since I should have gone whither I ought. But, Chihaya, with all your love, how much more would you grieve to think when in days coming they are singing the heroic tales of Genji in Hogen years, my name alone should be silent on their biwa strings?

*While TAMENAKA is speaking MASAKIYO appears behind the hedge, with RETAINERS following, unnoticed by the brother and sister who are facing the audience. They stand in a row in silence, their faces showing dim against the gloom which is now complete in the forest.*

TAMENAKA  
(turning with a start)

Masakiyo !

CHIHAYA  
(staggering back)

Ah !——

*Pause.*

TAMENAKA

Welcome to Kurama, Masakiyo ; you then bring news from the city ?

MASAKIYO

*(coming into the garden and kneeling down)*

Forgive me coming on you unawares, my honoured lord, gentle lady ; I bring you greetings from my master.



TAMENAKA

It is good to see you, Masakiyo ; we were growing weary of this lonely valley where the wind from the city tells us nothing of all we long to hear. Tell us of our father, is he strong once more and cured of his hurts ?

MASAKIYO

*(stammering out with obvious pain)*

He is restored to his old strength at last, my lord, and now his desire is to have you with him again, now that the troubled times seem over and the city streets quiet, and my master has sent me to look—to find you and escort you home. We have litters for you both beyond the forest waiting.

*Pause.*

CHIHAYA

Is it you, Masakiyo—you indeed who now comes—speaking so—with rank, false words upon your tongue—to us ? To him ?

TAMENAKA

You bring a message I have waited for eagerly, I am ready, Masakiyo.

CHIHAYA

*(getting frantic)*

No, not Masakiyo ! Are my eyes true—true ? It could not be he, not Masakiyo who so proudly loving, watched my little brother growing big upon

his lap, who now comes hunting, peeping, so wicked through the forest for his prey ! For Masakiyo was always our kindest, dearest friend—do you remember, Tamenaka, how with the first needle in my hand I sewed a little bridle and a saddle for his back which was so often a play horse for you to ride ?

TAMENAKA

Chihaya !——

MASAKIYO

*(in a strangled voice)*

My lady——

CHIHAYA

It is his voice, it sounded so.—But no, I'll not believe it ! Do you hear, you'll not deceive me, you cruel soul who mocks us with a face we love so well. You, Masakiyo ? The headsman ? Masakiyo, the dear guardian coming for the blood of his own darling ?

TAMENAKA

Hush, Chihaya ! What ungentle words are these ! You and I, know we not his faithful heart better than any else who know it ? If indeed he came on such an errand how heavy must his steps have been, how his grief must have grown with each turning of the road. Nay, do not heap sorrow on sorrow, but let us—in all gentleness of thought—take leave of one another.

MASAKIYO

*(as if suddenly broken by his grief, drops with his face to the earth and fumblingly takes out his sword)*

Take it, take it, my lord, and only in mercy drive it through me ! It is true that I have done this bitter travelling to seek you out and—yes, I, the miserable Masakiyo, to return to the city with your head ; my master could no longer pacify your foes, the imperial command was unevadable. But also it is true that all this evil day I have seen no light in the sky, no man on the earth, only the anguish of my journey's end, nor do I know how I could have crawled the long way back this evening to the city. Take this sword, my lord, take this sword and end the pain which I can bear no more !

TAMENAKA

No, Masakiyo, not for nothing are you called the right arm of Yoshitomo, who amidst all his more than human suffering, even like the gods cannot seek escape in death lest our great clan perish in the dust. Rather let us think of him and of his love for us, and take me where you must ; for there is no measure to a man's grief and no end if we stand shedding tears.

CHIHAYA

*(burying her face in his breast)*

O Tamenaka,—Tamenaka——

TAMENAKA

My sister, sweet sister, farewell !—remember our souls are always in your care.

TAMENAKA *gently frees himself and goes out in*

*front of MASAKIYO, who can scarcely support himself for grief. CHIHAYA falls to the ground in an agony of tears. Two RETAINERS remain standing outside the hedge. The garden is now submerged in darkness and in the pale twilight sky a star begins to shine. The bells of a Buddhist temple nearby toll the hour in deep tones. CHIHAYA is left alone in her grief while the slow bells continue.*

## CURTAIN

## SCENE II

*The same room and garden of YOSHITOMO'S house as in Act II., Scene I.*

*A cloudy morning following the previous scene.*

YOSHITOMO and MASAKIYO are both sitting in the room.

MASAKIYO

Yes, and although 'twas dark already, the gentle nun set off at once for the cottage ; and I left two servants to attend upon the lady Chihaya.

YOSHITOMO

Send Yoritomo and his nurse to Kurama to-day, the little one may yet in part console her.

MASAKIYO

It shall be done.—(*in moved tones*) My lord, let me beseech your charity to let me lay by my sword and henceforth in the patient robe of a monk serve the spirits of your brothers, devoting my residue of days to their Mourning Rites.

YOSHITOMO

What, Masakiyo !

MASAKIYO

I could not so far forget all that I owe you for the infinite grace you and your fathers have shown my house so long as to follow then and there on his dark journey the young lord it was my proud task to guard and foster. Yet—since I have held his head all bloody in my hand, I feel the very bones within me crushed, and fear that should I serve you still with my sword and arrow they would be sharp and sure no longer. O my lord, hear this prayer and grant me the one favour I shall ever beg of you in this or seven worlds.

YOSHITOMO

Go your ways, Masakiyo; at least you are richer in liberty than I.

MASAKIYO

My lord——

YOSHITOMO

Nay, leave me, leave me. We will talk by and by, piously, profanely as you will, but now I also would be alone with my griefs, my jealous griefs that grudge me a moment from their brooding.

*A MAIDSERVANT enters through the fusumas on the left.*

MAIDSERVANT

Lord Shinzei, the priest, would speak with you, my lord.



## YOSHITOMO

Thus is my fortune. But what does he want of me now, this wolf ; what villainy has he hidden under his pious cloak this morning ?—Make ready the guest room.

*He goes out through the fusumas on the left, followed by the MAIDSERVANT, while MASAKIYO passes through the fusumas at the back and, leaving them open, is seen arranging the cushions in the inner room. YOSHITOMO returns leading SHINZEI and together they enter the room at the back. MASAKIYO, after bowing, closes the fusumas and retires to the left. Pause. YORITOMO comes running into the garden with a little bow and arrows in his hands. He runs to the fence on the right where three small diamond-shaped targets, covered with gold paper and fixed on bamboo sticks, are stuck in a row on the ground. TAMEYOSHI follows him. He seems much weaker and supports himself with a stick.*

## YORITOMO

Look, Grandfather, aren't they set up nicely ? And I did it all myself ! Masakiyo promised to, but, pooh ! he is always busy now and never remembers what he says. Now you must watch me (*he runs back to the left, and standing beside TAMEYOSHI shoots an arrow which misses the mark*). Nay, that was just to try my arm you see ! (*he*

*shoots again and misses.*) Ah, and that went before it was ready, stupid arrow ! (*his third arrow sticks in one of the targets.*) Aha, hit—hit ! did you see ?

TAMEYOSHI

Well done, my child, well done !

YORITOMO *collects his arrows and makes a line where TAMEYOSHI is standing.*

YORITOMO

Now it is your turn, and you must not step over this line. But you will shoot properly, Grandfather ? Everyone save Aunt Chihaya tries to shoot badly on purpose because I am small, and I do not like it ; only Aunt Chihaya—(*suddenly forgetting the game*). Do you know, Grandfather, Masakiyo went to see Aunt Chihaya and my uncles yesterday !

TAMEYOSHI

(*grasping the child's shoulder*)

Ah ! How do you know ?

YORITOMO

That is a secret, but I will tell you because you gave me this bow. My father was talking to him in there, and I just came along and listened by the verandah post, but they did not see me because I ran away !

TAMEYOSHI

(*to himself*)

It is true Masakiyo was not seen all day.

YORITOMO

But they have not told me yet, I think they want to surprise me with the nice presents Masakiyo has brought me. But I am so happy they are all coming home now.

TAMEYOSHI

Ah, did you hear that too, my child ?

YORITOMO

Yes, but you do not know who told me—my mother !

TAMEYOSHI

Your mother !

YORITOMO

Yes, I saw her last night, just sitting by my bed. She told me to be good and brave, and soon she would come back with Aunt Chihaya and all my uncles ; so I laughed and jumped about. But when I asked her why she could not come back now she scolded me and I cried, and then she was gone. But I know she will come, they will all come, and Father will not be cross any more—O Grandfather, why is he so cross ? Is he ill ?

TAMEYOSHI

Yoritomo, tell me what they were talking of, your father and Masakiyo, yesterday ?

MASAKIYO *comes into the garden through the little gate on the right.*

YORITOMO

Hush, there he comes ! You must not tell him that I told you. (*To Masakiyo*) You wicked, wicked man, you never did what you promised, and, see, I had to stick them up all by myself.

MASAKIYO

Forgive me, little lord, I had so much to do——

TAMEYOSHI

There is a guest, Masakiyo ; who is he ?

MASAKIYO

Lord Shinzei, my lord.

TAMEYOSHI

Shinzei !——

YORITOMO

But, Masakiyo, why, why are you hiding them ? It is no use because I know all about it——

MASAKIYO

Hiding what, my little lord ?

YORITOMO

Oh, you wicked badger ! I know where you went yesterday, and I know that Aunt Chihaya and my uncles must have sent me some nice presents !

MASAKIYO

(*at first staggering, then recovering himself*)

Yes, yes, there were presents, and I—I had forgotten——

YORITOMO

Forgotten ?

TAMEYOSHI

Then it is true, you went to see them ?

MASAKIYO

I—I did——

YORITOMO

*(suddenly catching the sound of a raised voice from the inner room)*

What is the matter ! Listen how angry Father is ; that guest must be a wicked man.

*They all stand listening.*

MASAKIYO

Your pardon, my lord, the guest seems going ; I must warn his litter-bearers.

*He retires through the little gate. YOSHITOMO opens the back fusumas. He is visibly shaken with suppressed rage.*

YORITOMO

Fa——

TAMEYOSHI

Hush ! *(he draws the child to him, and involuntarily withdraws a step, and they remain thus unobserved by the two in the room.)*

SHINZEI

*(still in the inner room)*

Then this is your last word ?

YOSHITOMO

My last word, my lord, and already too much has been said.

SHINZEI

*(coming out of the inner room and pausing on the threshold)*

My lord, all this grieves me deeply. I have only come to offer you advice, as our old friendship urged me, to save you the distress his coming will bring on you.

YOSHITOMO

All my thanks, my lord, for your kindness, but I am ready to receive any officer the court may choose to send, be it Kiyomori or the Devil himself, demanding further monstrous deeds of my red hands !

SHINZEI

How can I convince you that your sorrows are suffered in every heart, echoed in every mouth ; mourned on the throne itself and under every roof in the city ? Were it not so——

YOSHITOMO

I am, indeed, consoled to think that what I took to be my private curse, circulates the world through, vulgar as any piece of copper that plies between merchant and merchant !

SHINZEI

*(not heeding him)*

Were it not so, my lord, such an injustice—for you must concede it is a rank injustice to let the leader live and punish his mere followers—had never been permitted to continue to so late a day as this.



## YOSHITOMO

Commend me to the Chancellor, my lord, and I send him with all respect this message, that Yoshitomo still stands upon his feet, and all his brothers' heads are on the banks of Shijo, each sworn to protect the white head of Tameyoshi!—permit me to lead you on your way, my lord.

## SHINZEI

Well, well; there is naught then to be done. Pardon my discourtesy, my lord.

*He goes out through the fusumas on the left, followed by YOSHITOMO.*

## YORITOMO

But he was a priest! What a naughty priest to make Father so angry; I must go and shoot him.

*He slips from TAMEYOSHI'S hold and, kicking off his zoris, runs up on to the yengawa and out to the left.*

## TAMEYOSHI

So this is the true colour of the world which you have veiled to cheat my dim, aged eyes! Alas! then, you have kept me creeping in the sunshine not knowing that my days were numbered by my own children's heads, that the frail breath in my old body cost the best of my blood. Not so, my son, 'tis you who see obscurely, if you think a soft couch a kindness for your father when his sons in

his stead go to that other rest which the gods, long since, prepared for him.

*He goes out to the left of the garden. Pause.*

YOSHITOMO comes back and stands vacantly in the middle of the room, leaving the fusumas unclosed behind him. YORITOMO comes running in after him and shuts them.

YORITOMO

Father, Father, I have shot him!—I have shot the litter of that bad priest who angered you so! (*checking himself at the sight of his father's strange appearance.*) What is the matter, Father? Are you sick?

YOSHITOMO  
(*abstractedly*)

Sick, child, sick—because my breast heaves and sinks like any other man's—or like a dog's, while out there in the garden there are stones and trees and I—I am not one of them.

*He sits down as if collapsed.*

YORITOMO

Shall I—shall I call Masakiyo, Father?

YOSHITOMO  
(*his eyes suddenly gleaming, he springs up*)  
Aye, call him! Bring Masakiyo to me!

YORITOMO *rushes out.*

## YOSHITOMO

So to this you have lured me, you gods, to this ! Have I forced my soul through all these savage toils only for the mocking laughter of these cowards and liars ? Was this promise that I bought with the heads of my brothers naught but an idle bubble on the water of the ditch ?—(*again wanderingly*) Is nothing in the world, then, true and real ? All are bubbles and shadows as the sorry priests say ? Do we live but in shadows and dreamings, and our deeds, are they no more than vapours to vanish with the moon ? Do I dream ? Have I dreamed ? And my hands, are they not steeped in the blood of my brothers ? If I wash them in water from the rocks will they again be glad and light as when, fresh of heart, I used to exercise my bow in the morning dews ?—Is there no wound in my breast that cuts deeper as the sun's wheel rolls from east to west ? Shall the night come no more lit by the torches of my anguish burning brightly for all the winds and rains ?

MASAKIYO *comes from the left with YORITOMO clinging to his sleeve.*

## MASAKIYO

You sent for me, my lord ?

## YOSHITOMO

Tell me, Masakiyo, are there no head-boards on Shijo's banks ?

MASAKIYO

My lord?—

YOSHITOMO

Are there no head-boards on the banks of Shijo  
and no heads staring at the sun and the rain?

MASAKIYO

I have begged of you to grant me—

YOSHITOMO

*(breaking into sinister rage)*

Nay, then, 'tis true, 'tis true! The heavens  
have seen these things and have not crumbled,  
the earth has harboured them and has not broken.  
Masakiyo, I must ask you to spare your hair the  
shears a little longer, for I stand in need of your  
vicious arms before I count on your devout soul.—  
Call up all our men; prepare for war!

MASAKIYO

For war?

YOSHITOMO

Kiyomori is coming, sent by the State to arrest  
my father; first we shall offer his blood to the  
furies of the war to come.

MASAKIYO

But what war, my lord; against whom—?

YOSHITOMO

Against all who surround the throne and with  
their lying tongues and faithless hearts make this  
world too foul a place for men to live in.

MASAKIYO

You mean—you will loose your arrows on the State ?

YOSHITOMO

On the State, on the court, on palaces and temples : on all their men and women, on all their beasts and gods——

MASAKIYO

My lord, what words are these—— ?

YOSHITOMO

Ah, do I shock you, pious Masakiyo, with my ungodly words ? Believe me, they shock me more, these mild and holy gods of yours ! Do you know the ancient tale of an angry god, of China or of India I know not which, who dashed his head against the world's pillar and brought down the vault of Heaven ? That god, Masakiyo, is my god to-day ; he, the angry one, for if none yet trod this old earth with heavier wrongs upon his back than I, I may outdo them all in anger also. Gird on your sword, my friend, let it be seen if these equivocal courtiers and their leering gods have made of me a fiend for their support and pleasure only. More call have I this day to run fire and death across the east and west than any wild volcano, spouting flame to raze a countryside ; and my right of wrath I cede not even to the growling, shaking earth, destroyer of the hives of man ! Arm ! Arm ! Masakiyo ! Let the gongs



sound at the gates—and we shall leave some scar upon these islands that shall last as long as they do.

TAMEYOSHI *appears opening the left fusumas. He is deathly pale and is striving not to fall.*

TAMEYOSHI

What is this raving madness on your tongue, my son?

YOSHITOMO

Father!—— But what is it, you look—(*guessing the truth, he rushes to him*). O Father, what have you done——?

*He aids his father to sit down and loosens the girdle of his dress under which his garments are already soaked with blood.*

TAMEYOSHI

Nothing but what I should have done long since had you not disguised the world for me, my son. Yes, although belated, take this gift of mine, the last and best that I could give you, and use it as you used the armour I once gave you, bravely in our fathers' cause. Little was my wisdom that I saw not sooner that my white head on the head-board of Shijo could be a crown for finer things than this old withered body.

YOSHITOMO

O, Father—Father——!



TAMEYOSHI

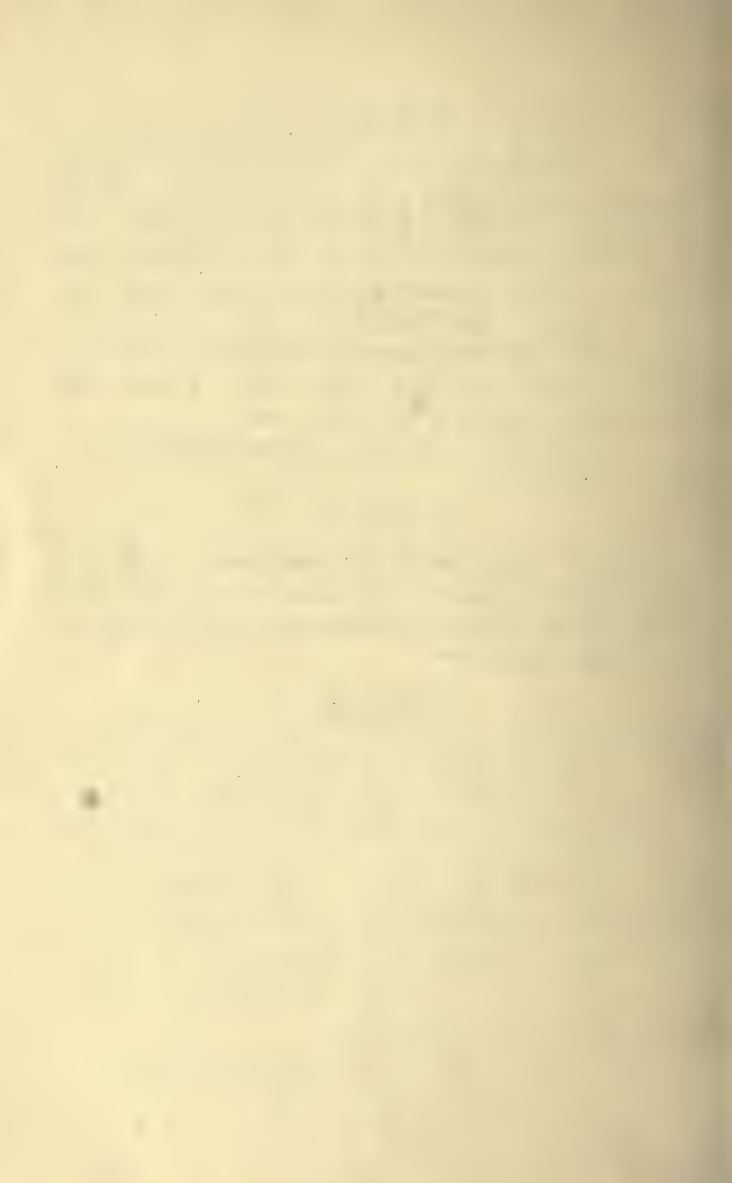
Not in madness shall you seek refuge, now at the last moment when you have borne and suffered martyrdom unheard of in the old days or these. Not in madness shall you expiate life's soreness, now when a fairer to-morrow comes importuning the feet of Genji. No, Yoshitomo, like the god who first found iron in the earth, you will leave stouter hearts to men that shall come after. Your father thanks you—where is the little one?

YOSHITOMO *fumblingly pushes forward* YORITOMO.

TAMEYOSHI

Ah, little one, I will give you also—I will give you a much—much bigger bow—and you shall shoot—all the stars of heaven soon! A good game it shall be—(*he dies*).

CURTAIN



# EPILOGUE



*The bank of Shijo, the place of execution. Midnight :  
earth and skies are torn by thunder and rain,  
while the darkness is slashed almost continuously  
by the lightning, which reveals in the centre  
of the stage the " head-board " on which glimmers  
the head of TAMEYOSHI, visible even between the  
flares of lightning, as if lit inwardly with phosphor.  
A terrific peal of thunder : YOSHITOMO staggers in  
from the right.*

### YOSHITOMO

Again, again, blind thunderer, have you missed me ?

Do you stray in the darkness ?

Is the wind too rough for the lightning's flimsy  
lantern that it shivers out so often ?

Aim with colder fury, friend, and find me !

A fairer mark than one of your stars for my arrow

Is my breast for you——

For it burns and burns—no winds can muffle the  
fire of it.

It bleeds and bleeds—no rains, though eternity  
wept, could drown the welling, pulsing blood !

*Another thunder crash.*

Fool ! Fool ! once more !

Or is it your grim pastime still to drive me up and  
down

Knowing there is left me now no shadow between  
earth and heaven

To hide me from the deluge of your spears ?

*Thunder again, YOSHITOMO laughs madly.*

So! Laugh away then! Laugh till your sides  
ache—I will laugh with you, I will ache  
too!

For 'tis a mad, mad world, a merry world——  
Too many stars in your sky: too many men in  
our earth, although we dig and dig to bury  
them.

Aye, 'tis an ape's dream upside down——  
Screaming, tumbling, heads and heels jamming,  
Ah, and I know the reason why!

Men's heads are too heavy on their shoulders, heads  
that are but casks of this world's nonsense,  
after all——

Best carried under arm—eh?

*The thunder sounds like a peal of laughter  
from hundreds of men. The face of TAME-  
YOSHI shines clearer. YOSHITOMO staggers  
and supports himself against the head-  
board. The madness leaves his voice,  
which gradually rises to exaltation.*

Not so, you earless, eyeless, memberless pursuers:  
You shall not hound me to the dark-souled laughter  
of a madman,

Nor force my hands into a knot of prayer for the  
mercy of a rope to choke my thought.

No, no, you may rest there in peace, my Father;  
no frenzy shall ever steal me from you;

Nor from the lonely peaks where we have climbed  
to build our fame in undiscovered rock,

And where the torches of our names shall be forever  
Torches for the faith of men,



Though worlds should crack and crumble and be  
lost

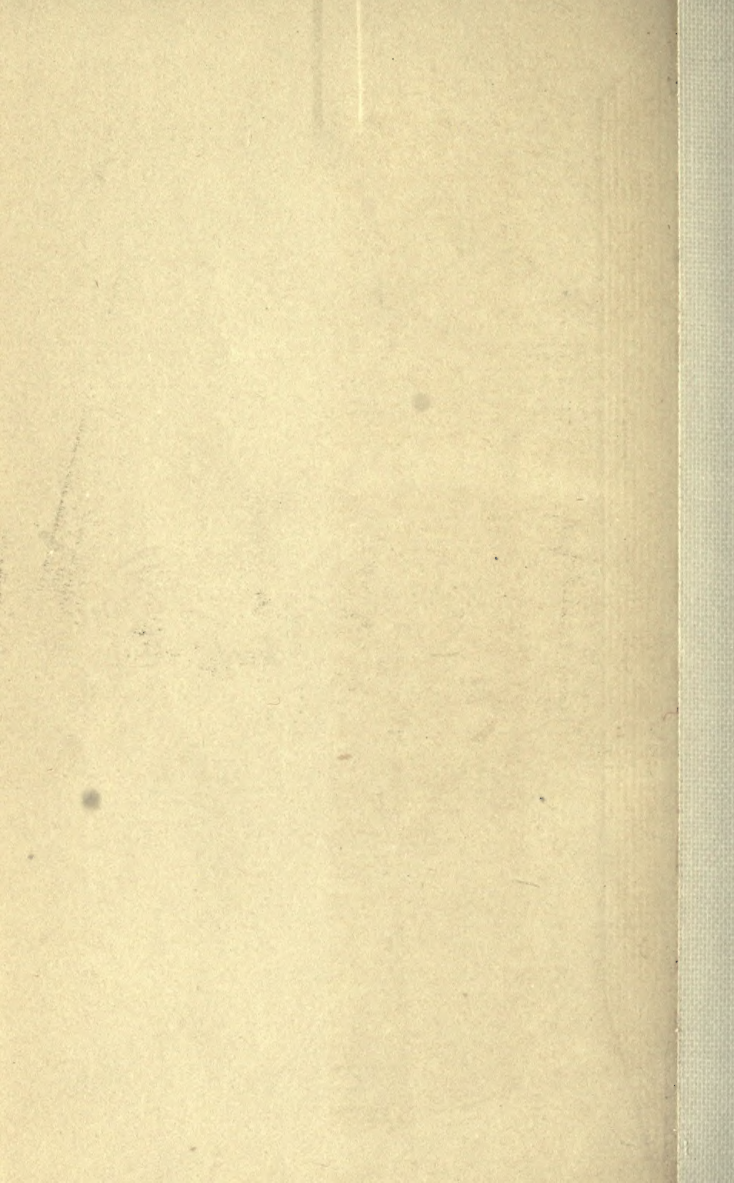
In the dust of nothingness.

*The thunder rolls again and once more the  
awful laughter fills the sky.*

## CURTAIN







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